

## Why write?

The decision to reach out to your loved one's transplant recipient is a very personal choice. Some donor families find that sharing stories and information about their loved one is helpful in their grieving process.

For recipients, correspondence may provide an opportunity to thank the donor family for the gift of life, hope, and health they received.

LifeCenter Northwest and transplant center social workers will help in sending your letters back and forth. All correspondence is anonymous at first, until both sides decide they would like to share identifying information with one another. The exchange of direct contact information generally occurs only after some anonymous communication.

Working together to save lives  
through organ and tissue donation.

Questions?  
We are here to help.

**Donor Family Aftercare**  
(425) 201-6600  
(877) 275-5269

[www.lcnw.org/families](http://www.lcnw.org/families)

Donor Families  
Writing to Recipients



# What to Write...

General information about yourself, which may include:

- Your first name
- Your relationship to the donor
- The state (not city) in which the donor lived and the state (not city) where you live
- The donor's family information (marital status, children, grandchildren)
- Information about your loved one's life, passions, hobbies, etc.

Carefully consider disclosing religious or political comments as the views of recipients are unknown.

## Will I hear from the transplant recipient(s)?

You will be contacted if we receive return correspondence. Keep in mind, just as some donor families prefer privacy and choose not to write, a recipient may not write or respond due to a variety of personal reasons. Examples may include fear of adding to the donor family's grief, their recovery process, or guilt or sadness about their improved health. Some transplant recipients have shared that the life-saving gift can be overwhelming and it is difficult for them to express their gratitude in words. It may also take several months or even years before they feel comfortable responding to their donor family. Experience shows that that transplant recipients are profoundly grateful for the gift of life.



*Remember, anyone can write at any time. There is no right or wrong time to be in touch.*

## Mailing Your Correspondence

Please mail or email your letter(s) to LifeCenter Northwest following the instructions below and we will help distribute to recipients.

- Place your letter in an unsealed envelope
- On a separate piece of paper, include:
  - The name of your loved one
  - Your full name and relationship to donor
  - The date donation occurred
- Mail your letter and identifying information to:  
LifeCenter Northwest  
Attention: Donor Family Aftercare  
3650 131st Ave. SE, Ste 200  
Bellevue, WA 98006
- Or email your letter to:  
FamilyAftercare@lcnw.org

Once reviewed, we work directly with transplant center social workers who will deliver the letter to the recipients.

## Example...

*"Dear friend, I don't know quite how to begin this letter. It took me several days to figure out how to even address you. You have a name, an identity, a life... and yet our connection, while a single aspect of my life, is deeply meaningful to me. You are part of the legacy my husband left for me and our two young children. You are one part of the many lives he touched in his death. I am finally daring to learn more about the recipients of his life-saving gifts, one of which is you."*

